

First, I wanted to thank you for your efforts in leading the county. I've also served in a similar capacity, and I know it's a thankless job at times. I also wanted to thank you for the opportunity to provide an opinion about the concept of vaccine passports and the implementation of such here in Montgomery County.

As I'm sure you're aware, before any implementations are made in relation to covid, we must view things in terms of the known science at the time. In relation to vaccine passports, it's important to understand the background of the vaccines themselves. It is known that the clinical endpoints of the phase 3 study with the Moderna version of the vaccine was never to prevent somebody from catching covid. It was simply to demonstrate that the vaccine would reduce the risk of severe illness or death – which is something we can all agree has appeared to occur based on the ongoing data analyses that are available in the public. I have no knowledge of the phase 3 studies on the other vaccines but would assume their clinical endpoints were also similar.

We also know that people are catching this omicron variant at a high rate, regardless of vaccination status. Frankly, I've had it recently and I'm fully vaccinated and boosted so as stated above, the vaccine is not preventing one from catching covid – nor would we expect it to do so. The implementation of a vaccine passport to enter restaurants, bars, gyms etc would not be a mitigation strategy that would slow the spread of covid. Whether electronic or paper or whatever mechanism is used, it's just evidence that one is vaccinated and that's all. Given that the vaccinated are also catching covid at a high rate, this makes this mitigation strategy unnecessary and frankly ineffective.

This will put an unnecessary burden on businesses for zero payback in the slowing of the spread of covid. I have spoken to at least one restaurant owner who will not enforce this if implemented, and I'm sure there are others. This risks the business, the jobs, and the impact to the economy for what? Again, no benefit to slow the spread of covid. I would encourage you to consider the science when making a decision on this important issue and make the decision to NOT implement any form of vaccine passport requirement.

I'll close with this simple, and probably overused meme – it really does sum up the science in a few words. Thanks for your consideration of these statements in your decision-making process.

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